

Stuart, Fla. – Congressman Tom Rooney (R-Fla.), a member of House Armed Services Committee and former Army JAG officer, released the following statement after the Obama Administration announced its plan to bring self-proclaimed 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed to trial in civilian criminal court in New York City:

“The decision by the Obama Administration to bring the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks to New York City for trial is unfair to the families of the victims of these horrendous attacks. Moreover, this action could potentially put New York City at unnecessary risk of further attack. As a former Army JAG officer and prosecutor I believe this decision undermines our military commission system.

“The attacks on New York and Washington on 9/11 were acts of war, not simple crimes under our criminal code. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and his cohorts are war criminals and should be prosecuted in a military tribunal.”

The National Defense Authorization Act revived the Military Commission Process for Fiscal Year 2010 and this announcement by Attorney General Holder directly contradicts this legislation. The act updated the Military Commissions process in order to protect classified information while affording detainees basic due process rights.

Congressman Rooney has sponsored legislation to prohibit the transfer of Guantanamo detainees into the State of Florida and has supported legislation and provisions to keep them out of the continental United States. Earlier this year Rooney toured the detention facilities at Guantanamo where he had the opportunity to meet with the professional men and women of the Armed Services stationed at the base and see the state of the art facilities.